

# ESG INITIATIVES 2024

## A year in review



TACKLING HOMELESSNESS

# Initiatives throughout 2024



We ran mandatory **ESG training**, to ensure all employees are aware of the various initiatives being undertaken both by Venn and by the ESR Group. ESG objectives are now in place for all Venn staff, and form part of the overall objectives set for the coming year as part of the annual performance review process.



Together with the wider ESR Group, we celebrated **International Women's Day** on 8th March. We organised another donation drive for women's workwear on behalf of **SmartWorks**, a charity focused on encouraging and supporting disadvantaged women seeking to return to work. We also raised £1,600 through the Cycle for SmartWorks event, whereby three members of staff cycled 100 miles from 23rd February and 8th March 2024. In addition, and to recognise the importance of our female staff, and as small token of thanks for all their hard work, a trip to the nail spa was arranged, where much fun and laughter was had!



In May we moved into a **new environmentally and energy efficient office** in Soho. The building will produce 61 tonnes less CO2 per annum, using fossil fuel free with low embodied carbon. It was renovated using locally sourced and sustainable building materials and is aligned with UKGBC Net Zero. It is rated BREAM Excellent and forms part of the Smart building programme.



Our old, **decommissioned IT equipment** arrived in Nigeria. The equipment is to be used for a project run by the KBS Academy to teach local women basic IT skills, which will hopefully lead to improved job opportunities.



One of our employees participated in the London Marathon to raise vital funds for **Coram**, a charity aimed at improving the lives of children from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. A total of £2,436 was raised, with the firm making a donation of £1,000.



A team of 10 attended the annual **Marie Curie Brain Quiz** night; raising vital funds to support this charity, which helps families with end-of-life care and support.





The ESR Group unveiled its **ESG Report** for 2023, which included details of Venn's ED&I training workshops and also a case study on the Affordable Housing Grants Scheme. Venn also produced its own ESG report for 2022/23, which contains detailed information on our ESG related activities and investments. This is available on our website.



Team members spent a day volunteering at **Wearegrow** agroecological farm and outdoor learning hub, at the Totteridge Academy in North London. Wearegrow works with schools and local communities delivering bespoke programmes in sustainable food growing and outdoor learning. Our enthusiastic team spent the day weeding and clearing, sorting and labelling produce.



We are committed to being carbon neutral by seeking to reduce and then offset our carbon emissions. We received our Carbon Neutral certification for 2023 from **Carbon Footprint** (details of which are published on CaDI) and we offset our emissions by purchasing gold standard credits for a cook stove project in Rwanda.



To mark **World Mental Health Day** on 10th October, we announced the roll-out of a series of workshops in collaboration with The Wellness Movement, a leading London-based wellbeing consultancy, to deliver training, support and guidance in the areas of mental health, wellbeing and mindfulness. We also reminded employees of the current employee benefits that can be accessed to assist with wellbeing and mental health issues. Employees were also encouraged to take time out of their day to focus on their own wellbeing and were invited to participate in a walk-through St James Park to Buckingham Palace.



Whilst Venn has been carbon neutral since 2019, we recently committed to a **Carbon Management Plan**, with a view to being net zero by 2050. We also rolled out an updated version of our ESG policy and published our new Responsible Investment policy.



Team members gave their time to assist **Heath Hands** with its daily conservation and garden maintenance, on Hampstead Heath. Heath Hands helps conserve 350 hectares of unique green space in North London, delivering a wide range of volunteering community, educational and nature related projects. Our enthusiastic team spent the day pruning, weeding and clearing!



Throughout the year our employees volunteered at events arranged through our membership with the **Academy of Real Assets**, an organisation which promotes social diversity within the real estate industry and helps young people from less privileged backgrounds seeking a career in real estate.

Partnering with schools, youth organisations and philanthropic groups, the Academy delivers a programme of workshops, site visits and work experience opportunities for young people, aimed at increasing socioeconomic diversity in real estate and real assets. This is our second year partnering with the Academy and one of our employees is a member of the Academy's Youth Board.



We donated several items of decommissioned IT equipment to the **Turing Trust** for redistribution to socially disadvantaged communities in Africa. Thanks to our donation 756 students will be able to learn vital IT skills, and beyond this the environmental impact from our donation will offset 12 tonnes of CO2 emissions, (the equivalent of planting 29 trees). The embodied energy savings created being enough to power 3 UK homes for an entire year!



Venn, as part of the ESR Group, received a 4\* rating in the UN PRI's report for fixed income, private debt. This was the firm's first year of formal reporting, and we are all pleased with our rating and look forward to implementing, the report's recommendations, where appropriate.



Brave team members once again slept out on the streets for one night to raise awareness and money for the homelessness charity **Streets of London**. The team raised over £1,870, which will be used to support some of the most vulnerable people in our society.



By the end of 2024, Venn had announced the funding of loans totalling £623 million under the **Affordable Homes Guarantee Scheme** which we manage on behalf of the UK Government. The purpose of the scheme is to finance social rent, affordable rent and shared ownership housing to support the delivery of around 17,000 new affordable homes in England. Venn also became an adopter of the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing.



To mark World Volunteering Day on 5th December, ten employees volunteered throughout November and December at the **Soup Kitchen**, near Tottenham Court Road. This is an excellent charity, playing a vital role in supporting the homeless, elderly, isolated and vulnerable people of London.

